



# WASTE STRATEGY

FOR ESSEX

2024 - 2054

## Appendix 1

Current Performance Summary  
and Key Data

Updated 14 September 2023

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## Waste trends and performance

Since 2000, there have been substantial changes in how Essex councils manage waste, the amount produced, and the proportion recycled or composted (Fig 1).

Despite an increasing population the quantity of waste collected each year by Essex Councils has remained stable for many years at around 700,000 tonnes. Fluctuations in total waste from year to year are generally due to economic factors, changing behaviours or operational changes to waste services.

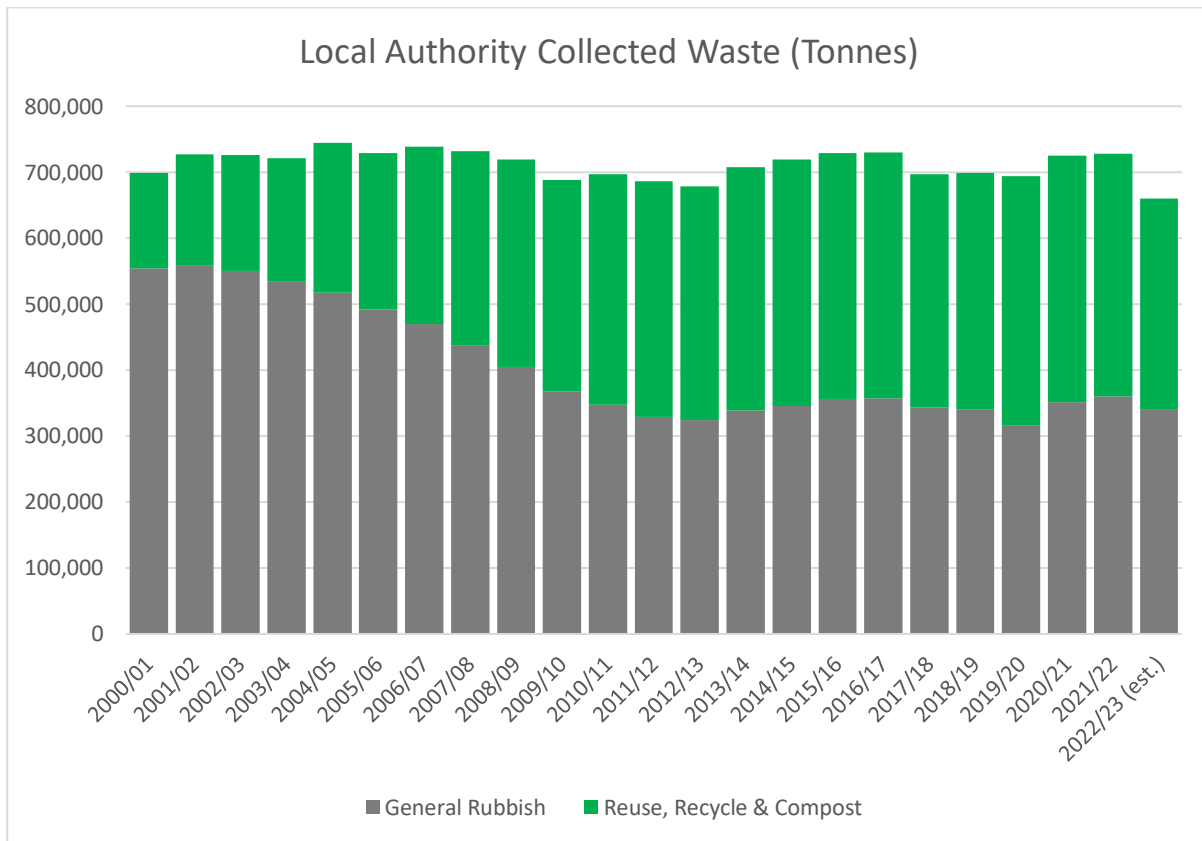


Figure 1 Total waste collected by Essex Local Authorities 2000/01 - 2022/23

In recent years the quantity and composition of waste has also been impacted by other factors. The coronavirus pandemic impacted many aspects of our lives including the amounts and types of waste we generated. During this period, the amount of household waste produced increased, and its composition changed as we spent more time at home. The most recent waste tonnage estimates for 2022/23 are indicating waste is at its lowest level for over 20 years, this is a national trend. This reduction is likely to be primarily due to the dry summer of 2022 which reduced the amount of garden waste generated.

Despite the most recent reduction in waste, Essex councils still collected over 660,000 tonnes of waste and recycling in 2022/23 – the equivalent weight of about 53,000 London buses.

The roll out of food waste recycling services throughout Essex, new materials being collected for recycling and changes to the frequency of general rubbish collections have all contributed to increasing the proportion of waste recycled or composted and reducing the waste going to landfill.

The Essex household composting and recycling rate increased from 21% in 2000 to 40% in 2007, driven primarily by the expansion of kerbside recycling services. The introduction of kerbside food waste collection services and other system changes from 2008 onwards led to further improvements with recycling rates peaking at 55%.

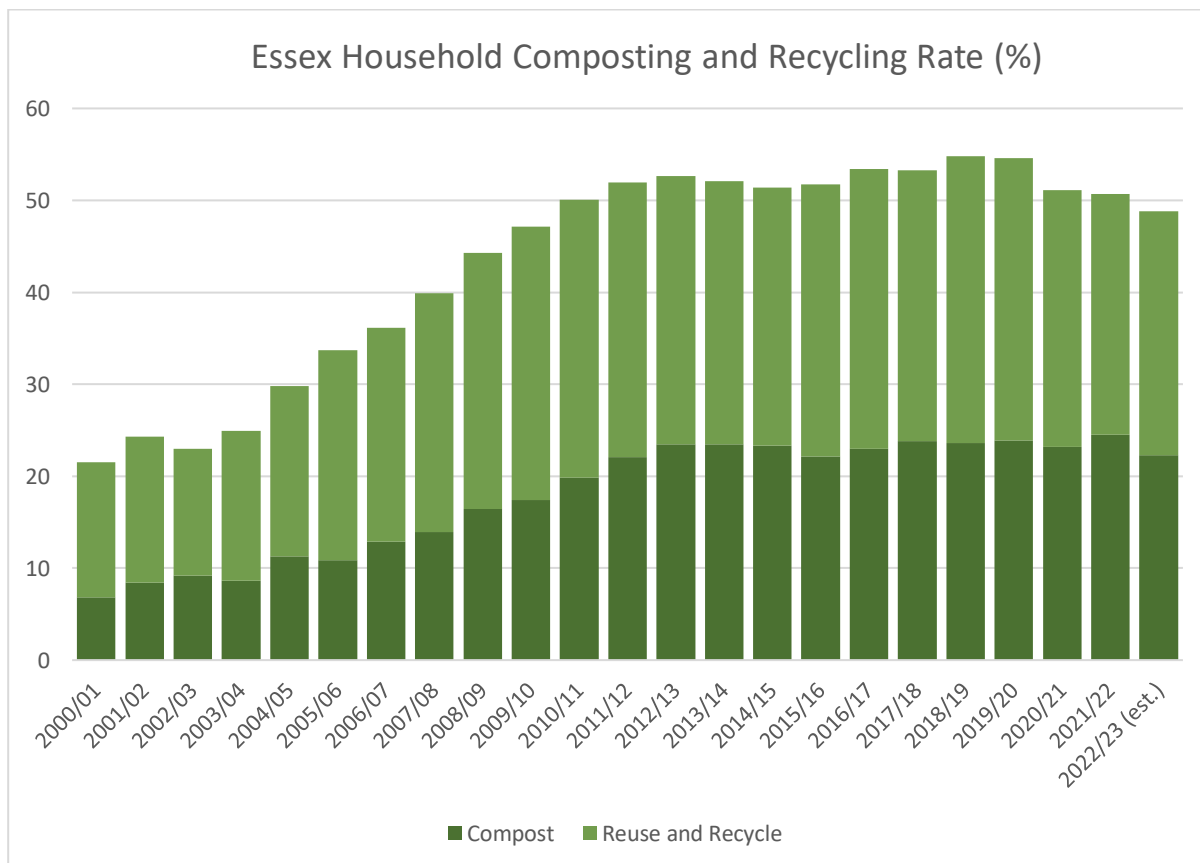


Figure 2 Essex Household Composting, and Reuse/Recycling Rate

The falls in performance since 2020 are due to a variety of operational and external factors. These include waste treatment changes meaning it not currently possible to remove recyclables from the general rubbish (this occurred in Essex between 2015 and 2019), as well as the impacts of Coronavirus and the dry summer of 2022.

**The recycling and composting rate for Essex remains higher than the national average of 44.1%<sup>1</sup> (2021/22).**

The recycling and composting rates at a local level in 2021/22 (the most recent audited data) varied from 40% to almost 60% across Essex. Local recycling and composting rates are

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results-202122/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results-202122>

affected by a range of factors including the collection method, housing type, the size of gardens, population demographic as well as socio-economic factors, which can impact participation in services.

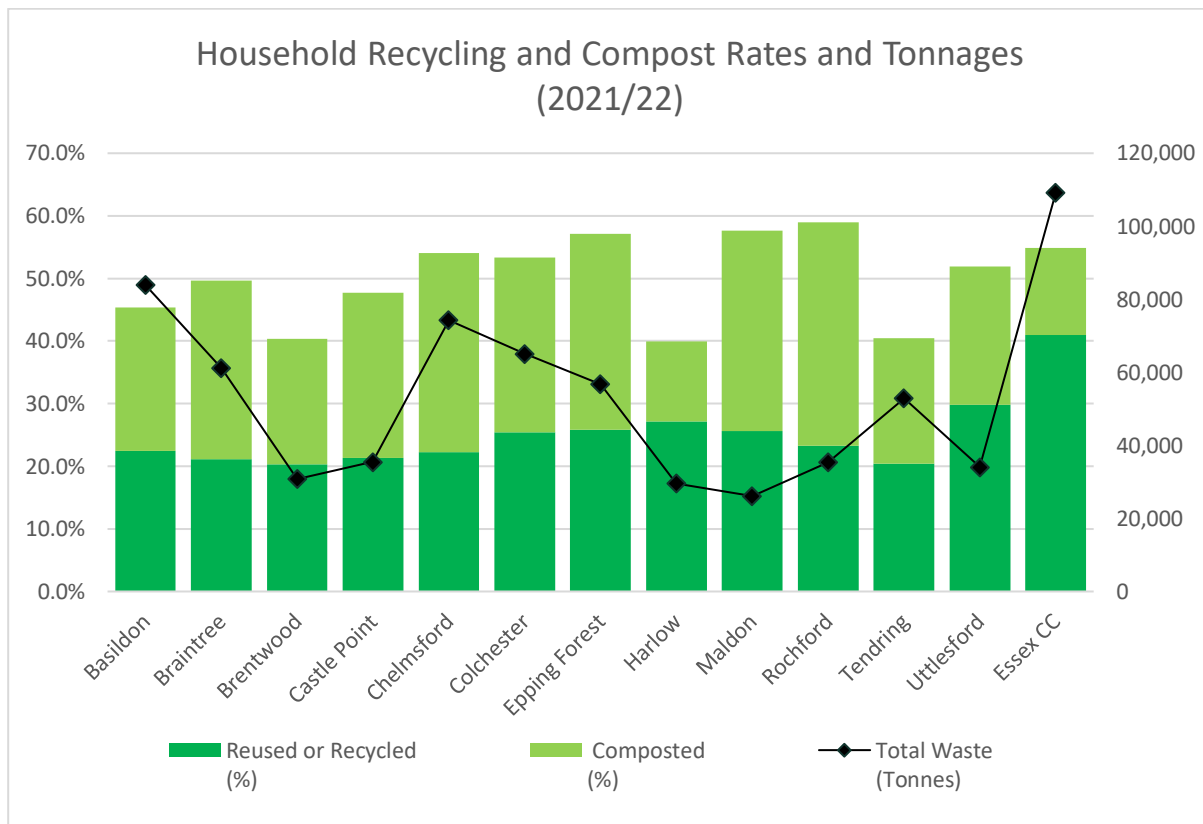


Figure 3 Recycling and compost rate and household tonnage by Waste Collection Authority and for Essex CC Recycling Centres for Household Waste

Although Essex performs well at recycling and composting when compared to the national average, we continue to produce too much waste.

Every resident in Essex produced an average of 460kg of waste in 2021/22 - this is equivalent to half the weight of a Fiat 500. Although this is almost 4% less when compared to 2010-11 it is still **10% more than the national average**.

Most of the waste Essex councils manage comes via the kerbside waste collection and cleansing services and is collected by the Borough, City or District Council. The rest comes via the recycling centres provided by Essex County Council.

Significant variations exist across Essex in the amount of waste produced per person and either collected from homes or cleaned from our streets.

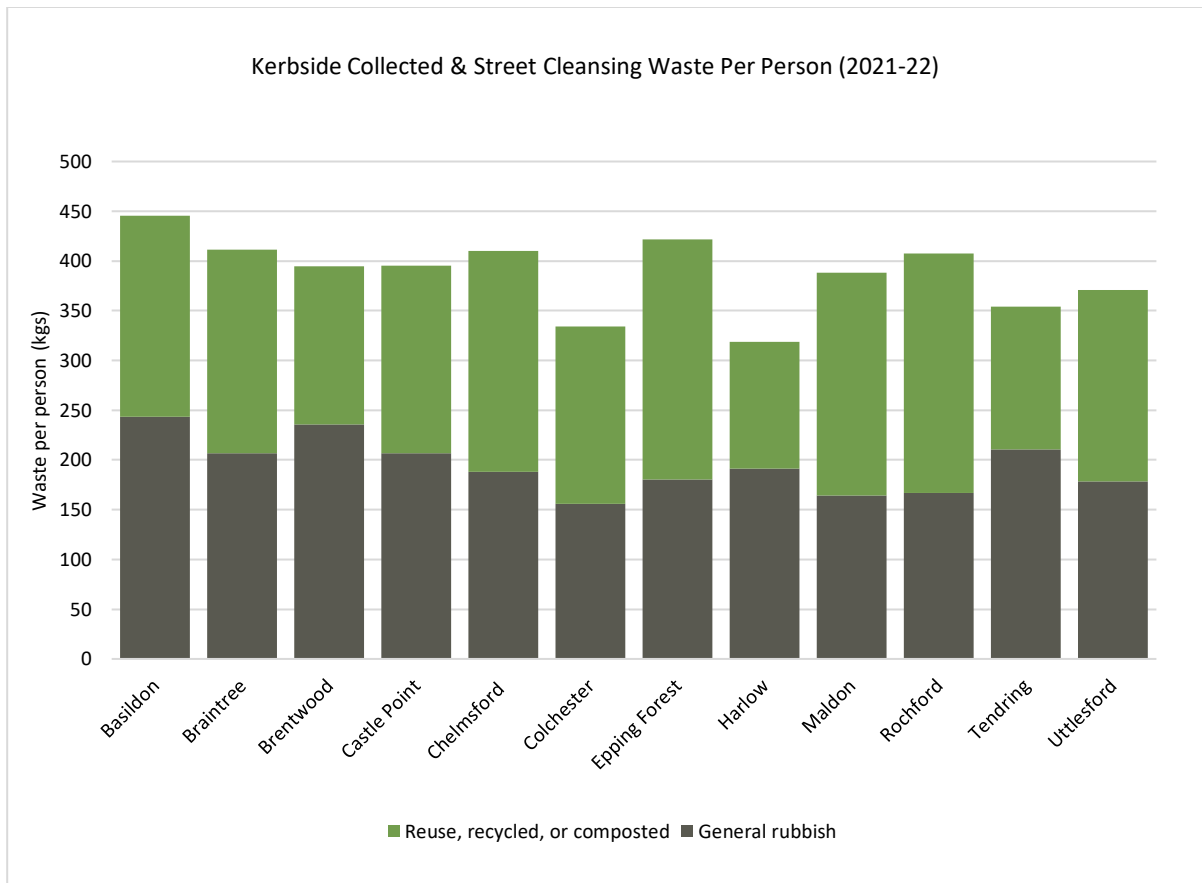


Figure 4 Kg of kerbside collected waste and street cleansing by Waste Collection Authority area

Although great progress has been made to reduce waste in Essex and to reuse, repair and recycle more, we continue to produce more waste than many other parts of the country.

### Waste composition

Although good progress has been made to increase recycling, significant amounts of recyclable materials continue to be present in the general rubbish. When recyclables are placed in the general rubbish, they become contaminated by other types of waste and become almost impossible to recycle meaning they will end up being sent to landfill. This is not only more costly than recycling and a waste of resources, but also the worst for the environment.

Waste composition sampling carried out by Essex Councils indicate that about 65% of the waste that was placed in wheelie bins, black sacks or general waste skips at the recycling centres could have been recycled if put in the right recycling container at the kerbside or recycling centres.

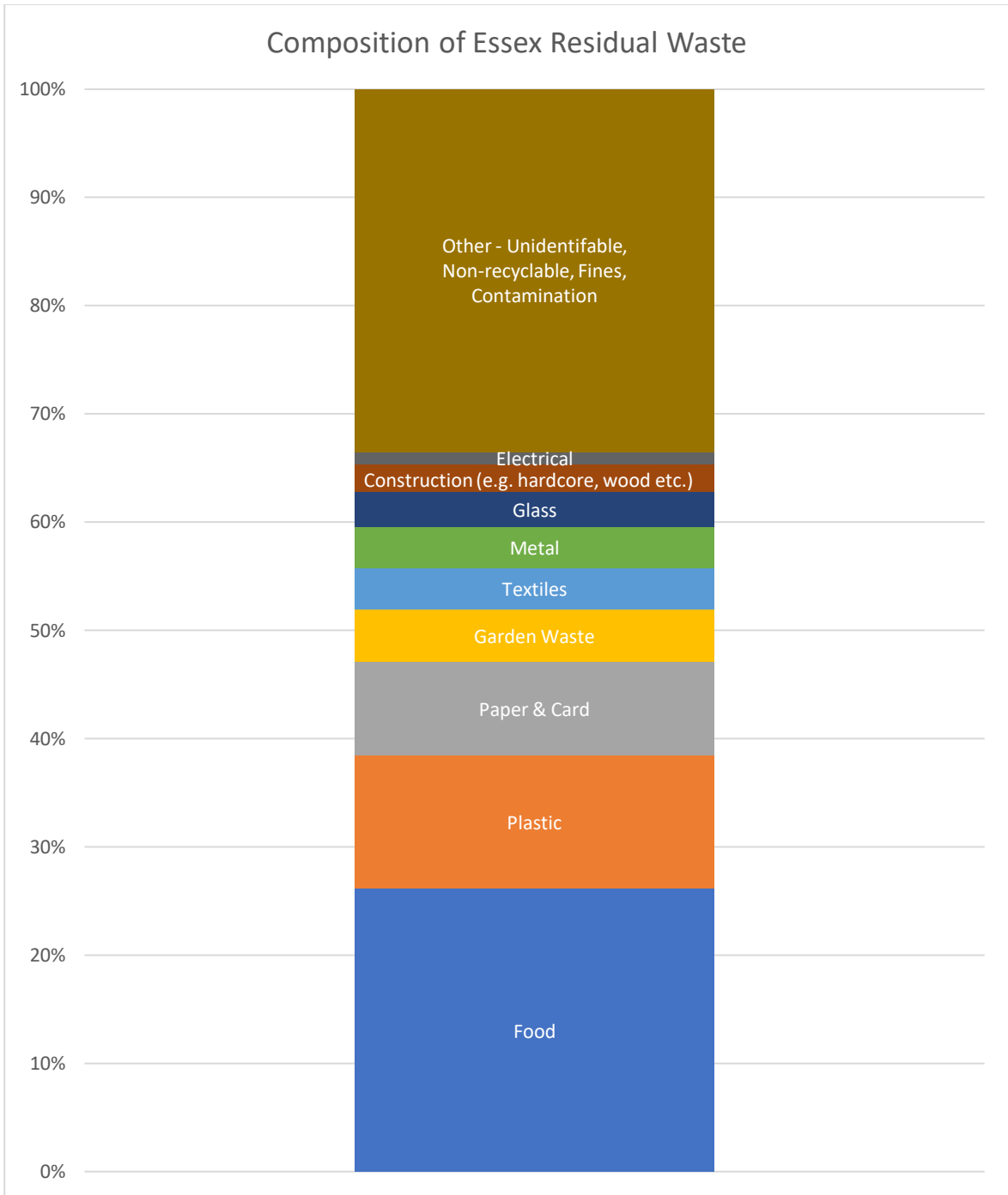


Figure 5 Composition of Essex Residual Waste

# Essex Waste Partnership

This information is issued by Essex County Council  
on behalf of Essex Waste Partnership

To have your say on the draft Waste Strategy for Essex  
2024-2054 and to see the full list of appendices, visit  
[https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/waste-strategy-  
for-essex-consultation/](https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/waste-strategy-for-essex-consultation/)

For help filling out the survey,  
call **0345 6037625**

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**RETHINKING**  
OUR WASTE